

FOURTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF ARDS PENINSULA U3A

THURSDAY 15th FEBRUARY 2024

AT DONAGHADEE COMMUNITY CENTRE

Report by Cavan Fuller, Chairperson.

During 2023 we have settled back into the Pre Covid environment and been able to enjoy the membership of our U3A with all the activities that our Groups provide.

The most important people in any U3A are the Group Leaders. Without members volunteering to lead Groups there can be no U3A. Our Group Leaders are -

Vicky Bryan (Bowls), Dympna Curran (Portaferry Paintbox), Ernie Farmer (Ukulele), Helen Farmer (Painting for Pleasure), Heather Fuller (Art), Elaine Gillespie (Craft), Muriel Graham (Jabberwalkers), Wesley Graham (Allotment and City Breaks), Jill Heron (Saturday Striders), Myrtle Johnson (Film and Theatre), Denise Kelly (Strollers), Linda Kilby (Genealogy), Iris King (Choir), Pat McNally (Books), Myrtle Ogle (Cloughey Bowlers), Alan Patterson (Song Writing), Christine Quinn (Gardening), Michael Sidwell (Bridge), Carmel Starr (Cuan Coffee and Days Out), and Jan Wheeler (French Conversation). There are two further Groups, Cards and History that I have some involvement in.

Without these individuals doing what they do, helping you to Learn, Laugh and Live there wouldn't be an Ards Peninsula U3A. I thank each of them for the enthusiasm, hard work and commitment they show.

We presently have 27 Groups. The new Song Writers Group held their first meeting on 15/11/23. There is a further Group holding its inaugural meeting on 24th of January, the Wine tasting Group. We hope that it's a success and that a Group Leader can be found to lead the Group into 2024.

Even as the number of our Groups continue to grow, a U3A can't have too many Groups. If you have an interest in a subject, of any kind, why not contact us and discover how easy it is to become a Group leader. You will receive all the help that's needed.

I will take this opportunity to thank the Committee Members who have served on the Committee this last year.

Ken Bell (Treasurer) Wesley Graham (Deputy Chairperson), Pat McNally (Membership Secretary), Jean McMullan (Groups Coordinator), Vicky Bryan (Meetings Secretary) Susie Harris and Heather Hoffman (technology). Dympna Curran, Jackie McCutcheon, Carmel Starr and Pat Stewart are also Committee Members giving us advice and support.

It is with regret that I have to inform you that Colin Dickey, our present secretary is standing down from the committee. He has served for three years as Secretary, and a year before that as Chairperson of the Steering Committee. The U3A rules state that no one may serve more than three years in the same post. A good rule but one that means we are losing an excellent Secretary. Thank you Colin, for your dedication and hard work. You have spent many hours behind the scenes, keeping the committee on track.

Carmel Starr has been a loyal committee member almost all of the last four years. Her advice has always been of benefit to the committee. After these four years she has decided to step down. She will be missed. She will, however, continue in her role as Group Leader of the Days Out Group and Cuan Coffee.

Our financial situation is sound, though not rich, we have sufficient to continue our day-to-day expenses until our AGM in February. Next year may present us with extra costs. Our present Treasurer, Ken Bell, ensures we do not stray too far from solvency.

One of the responsibilities of the Committee is to ensure the safety of our members as they enjoy their Group activities. To this end the new Secretary, when elected, will assist Group Leaders in this task.

A Sub-Committee has revamped our Facebook involvement. Further information will be forthcoming, and help supplied for those Group leaders who wish to use Facebook. We will still have an 'open page' that will be used for general information for people who are not Ards Peninsula U3A members.

We look forward to 2024 to Learn, Laugh, and Live a great deal more.
Cavan Fuller.

